

**New Program Proposal
Bachelor of Arts, Major in
Latin American and Caribbean Studies
College of Charleston**

Summary

The College of Charleston requests approval to offer a program leading to the Bachelor of Arts degree with a major in Latin American and Caribbean Studies for immediate implementation.

The Board of Trustees approved the proposal on April 23, 2004. The proposal was submitted for Commission review on August 15, 2004. The proposal was reviewed by the Advisory Committee on Academic Programs at its meeting on September 30, 2004. The Advisory Committee unanimously approved the proposal after a discussion which included the representative of the College responding to questions about the ability of the program to sustain its production of enrollments and graduates. The College's representative stated that the institution fully expected it would meet the Commission's requirements for both enrollment and degree completions, given the success thus far of the minor in this area and the increased interest in Latin American issues at the College of Charleston.

The purpose of the program is to prepare graduates with a solid understanding of Latin America from an interdisciplinary perspective. The proposal states that the program will be useful for students to develop a cultural understanding of the region, to promote inter-cultural dialogue, and to develop requisite skills and knowledge bases for possible careers in Latin American business, political, and cultural sectors. Students majoring in this program will be required to double major, i.e., to major in a discipline-based area as well as in this interdisciplinary program. The purpose of this requirement is to assure that students are deeply grounded in a discipline of study as well as broadly grounded in the regional studies of the Latin American reality. In addition, the staff has been informed by officials at the institution that the Artium Baccalaureatus will be available to be used as a complementary major to the proposed major in Latin American and Caribbean Studies.

The need for the program is based upon the increased interest in Latin America as a region among the College's students. In 1996, the College formally committed itself to the internationalization of its curriculum. In 1999, the College

received a two-year U.S. Department of Education grant to strengthen Latin American and Caribbean studies at the College. As a result, all courses offered in the major are already offered at the College on a regular basis. The College has two developed study abroad sites in Latin America (Chile and Cuba) and is developing a third (Brazil). The College also has added Brazilian Portuguese as a language taught at the institution. In 2003, the Board of Trustees committed the institution to “the high quality of interdisciplinary and international programs.” The College’s “Fourth Century Initiative” calls for the College to produce learners who are both familiar with global cultures and exhibit “a high level of social responsibility and commitment to local, national, and global communities.”

According to the proposal, the requirements of the courses unique to the interdisciplinary major within the degree’s curriculum will consist of a minimum of 30 semester hours. These semester hours will be divided into three categories: required foundation courses (for a total of 12 semester hours); two courses in the cultural and literary areas (for a total of 6 semester hours); and four courses (12 semester hours) from a group of electives of advanced courses in several disciplines as well as specialized courses offered only at study abroad sites. This third segment is focused on experiential and research issues, which build upon the earlier two segments of courses in the major. The foreign language requirements for this major must be satisfied with either Spanish or Brazilian Portuguese. No new courses will be necessary to add to the curriculum of the College, since all courses in the proposed curriculum are already being offered. Over the next five-year period, no new courses are contemplated for the major with the possible exceptions of courses from either Business or Music.

One other major program of this type exists in South Carolina at USC-Columbia. The small size of that program’s enrollments and graduates has placed it in a probationary status regularly with regard to the Commission’s program productivity standards; this fact led to the questions raised concerning the College of Charleston’s proposed major program in Latin American and Caribbean Studies. There are several differences between the context of these two institutional programs. The College of Charleston is dedicated to an international perspective by policy of the Board of Trustees; the Latin American and Caribbean Studies minor has been small but productive in both enrollments and graduates; and the major requires a second major. All three of these differences, in the opinion of the College of Charleston, will provide for the program’s meeting the Commission’s productivity standards.

Because the faculty members for the program are drawn from several disciplines, and because all these faculty members are already teaching at the College of Charleston, there will be no new faculty members required to implement the new program. A total of 18 faculty members (9.75 FTE) drawn

from a wide variety of disciplines within the institution's academic departments will teach in this program in the first three years of its operation; this figure will rise to 19 faculty (10.00 FTE) in the fourth and fifth years of the program's operation.

Enrollment in the proposed program is estimated to begin at 26 headcount students (13 FTE) in FY 2004-05 and increase to 50 headcount students (25 FTE) by FY 2008-2009. As stated above, if enrollment projections are met, the program will meet the current CHE program productivity standards.

The program will not be required to seek any accreditation or specialized certification. Although the Latin American Studies Association is the largest interdisciplinary association in American academia and continues to grow, the association exists for the promotion of scholarship about the region, not for any accrediting purpose.

There are no physical plant or equipment requirements for the proposed program's first five years of operation. The proposal indicates that new costs for library resources to support the program are estimated to be \$700 per year for each of the first five years of the new program's operations. The total estimated for new costs is \$65,750 for the first five years of the program's operations. In addition to the \$3,500 for the library resources, this figure includes \$17,540 for administration; \$29,250 for clerical/support personnel; \$ 6,500 for supplies and materials; \$1,500 for equipment; and \$7,500 for other (e.g., film festival, academic speakers, and the program's sponsored events.) No cost has been included for the salaries of faculty members, since the proposal assumes that they would be teaching the same courses for the existing minor if this interdisciplinary major did not exist.

Shown below are the estimated Mission Resource Requirement (MRR) costs to the state associated with implementation of the proposed program for its first five years. Also shown are the estimated revenues projected under the Mission Resource Requirement and the Resource Allocation Plan as well as student tuition.

Year	Estimated MRR Cost for Proposed Program	Extraordinary (Non-MRR) Costs for Proposed Program	Total Costs	State Appropriation	Tuition	Total Revenue
2005-06	\$103,714	0	\$103,714	\$0	\$120,316	\$120,316
2006-07	\$119,670	0	\$119,670	\$29,260	\$139,070	\$168,330
2007-08	\$159,560	0	\$159,560	\$33,711	\$185,163	\$218,874
2008-09	\$199,450	0	\$199,450	\$45,002	\$231,255	\$276,257
2009-10	\$199,450	0	\$199,450	\$56,293	\$231,255	\$287,548

These data demonstrate that if the College of Charleston can meet the projected student enrollments and contain costs as they are shown in the proposal, the program will be able to cover new costs with revenues it generates .

In summary, the College of Charleston will offer a Bachelor of Arts degree with a Major in Latin American and Caribbean Studies which will be one of only two in South Carolina. This degree will allow students to become culturally aware, to be knowledgeable about problems and potentials of the region, and to be prepared to take positions of responsibility and leadership in Latin American markets or with groups which seek to work in the region and serve Latin American populations.

Recommendation

The Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing recommends that the Commission approve the program at College of Charleston leading to the Bachelor of Arts in Latin American and Caribbean Studies, for immediate implementation, provided that no “unique cost” or other special state funding be required or requested.